

GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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What Was Poured Out

Caleb Westbrook

In Colossians 1:27 Paul states "...the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." Also, in 1 John 4:15, John writes "Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him..." In these passages it appears that deity is within us. Yet, we understand that the actual person of Christ or the Father is not literally inside of us. We know that Jesus and the Father are in heaven (Acts 2:33; 7:55). It is also apparent that a person is not able to be divided and still maintain identity as a singular being.

These previous passages use metonymy, which is "a figure by which one name or noun is used instead of another." Thus, when Christ is referred to as being in you, Paul is meaning that the knowledge of the resurrection is within us (our hope of glory), not the person of Christ. Also in 1 Jn. 4:15 "God abides in him" does not refer to the actual person of deity within us, rather God's authoritative word in our minds and lives.

Even though the concept of metonymy can be clearly understood with the person of God or

Christ, sometimes there is unnecessary confusion regarding the person of the Holy Spirit. The scriptures clearly reveal that the Holy Spirit is a being that is identified as a person: He is described as deity (Acts 5:1-4), He speaks (1 Tim. 4:1), He can be grieved (Eph. 4:30), and He can be lied to (Acts 5:1-4). There are several other passages that show aspects of the person of the Holy Spirit, however, we can be absolutely certain that He is a distinct person and He shares in the nature of deity with God and Christ.

Since the Holy Spirit shares the same attributes of a person of deity this would mean that He is a singular being who would not be able to be divided and still maintain personage. Thus the same concept of metonymy that is applied to Christ (Col. 1:27) and God (1 Jn. 4:15) should also be applied to the Holy Spirit. For example, in Acts 2:17, Peter quotes the prophet Joel showing that on the day of Pentecost, God began to pour out His Spirit (the Holy Spirit). With our knowledge of metonymy we can correctly understand this passage to mean the power of the Holy Spirit was being poured out, or ushered forth, to all flesh. This

does not mean that the person of the Holy Spirit was being poured out, rather His power. This came through the power of the miraculous gifts and eventually through the complete revelation of God's word, not some mystical indwelling. This is particularly evident in light of Acts 2:17-21 which demonstrates the effect of the pouring out, namely prophecy.

Also in Titus 3:5-6 we find that God "saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ." The same process applies to Titus as it did in Acts 2. Paul is not alluding to a pouring out of the person of the Holy Spirit within each individual Christian, but he is referring to the effects or works of the Holy Spirit. Paul illustrates this in the context by referencing the renewing of the Holy Spirit in regards to salvation, not a indwelling of the person of the Holy Spirit.

It was not the person that was poured out, it was the Holy Spirit's work.